CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:

digitally signing a web page that includes a trigger with a private key to provide a digital signature;

transmitting the web page, the digital signature, and a digital certificate from a first computer system to a second computer system; and

responsive to the trigger, automatically verifying the digital signature on the second computer system using a public key corresponding to the private key.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein transmitting comprises transmitting the web page, the digital signature, and the digital certificate including the public key corresponding to the private key from the first computer system to the second computer system.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein transmitting comprises transmitting the web page, the digital signature, the digital certificate, and an object from the first computer system to the second computer system.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein automatically verifying comprises responsive to the trigger, automatically verifying the digital signature on the second computer system using the object.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein digitally signing comprises:

hashing the web page to provide a message digest; and

digitally signing the message digest with a private key to provide the digital signature.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the trigger includes one or more of the following: a flag, variable, one or more lines of code, and subroutine.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising one of the following:

embedding the trigger in the web page;

incorporating the trigger in the web page;

appending the trigger to the web page; and

placing the trigger in a HTTP header of the web page.

8. A computer system, comprising:

a memory including one or more instructions; and

a processor coupled to the memory, the processor, responsive to the one or more instructions, to,

transmit a request for a web page over a communication link,

receive the web page including a trigger, a digital signature, and a digital certificate, and

responsive to the trigger, automatically verify the digital signature of the web page using a public key corresponding to a private key used to digitally sign the web page.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the processor, in response to the one or more instructions, to receive the web page, digital signature, and the digital certificate including the public key.

10. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the processor, in response to the one or more instructions, to receive the web page, digital signature, digital certificate, and an object, said object being executed by the processor to automatically verify the digital signature of the web page.

11. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the processor automatically verifies the digital signature of the web page by

hashing the web page to provide a calculated message digest;

decrypting the digital signature using the public key to provide a recovered message digest; and

comparing the calculated message digest and the recovered message digest.

12. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the trigger includes one or more of the following: a flag, variable, one or more lines of code, and subroutine.

13. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the memory includes a software routine for plug-in comprising the one or more instructions.

14. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the memory includes one of a browser software program and a plug-in comprising the one or more instructions.

15. A method, comprising:

receiving a request for a web page;

digitally signing the web page that includes a trigger with a private key to provide a digital signature, said trigger for causing a program on a computer system to automatically verify the digital signature of the web page; and

transmitting the web page, the digital signature, and a digital certificate to the computer system in response to receiving the request for the web page.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein transmitting comprises transmitting the web page, the digital signature, and the digital certificate including a public key corresponding to the private key to the computer system, in response to receiving the request for the web page.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein transmitting comprises transmitting the web page, the digital signature, the digital certificate, and an object to the computer system, in response to receiving the request for the web page.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said object, on the computer system, for detecting the trigger, and in response to detecting the trigger, automatically verifying the digital signature of the web page.

19. The method of claim 15 wherein the trigger includes one or more of the following: a flag, variable, one or more lines of code, and subroutine.

20. The method of claim 15 further comprising one of the following:

embedding the trigger in the web page;

incorporating the trigger in the web page;

appending the trigger to the web page; and

placing the trigger in a HTTP header of the web page.

21. A method, comprising:

transmitting a web page that includes a trigger from a first computer system to a second computer system;

displaying the web page on a display of the second computer system;

detecting the trigger by a program executed on a processor of the second computer system;

automatically requesting that the web page be digitally signed;

digitally signing the web page with a private key to provide a digital signature; and

transmitting the web page, digital signature, and a digital certificate to the first computer system.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein the trigger includes one or more of the following: a flag, variable, one or more lines of code, and subroutine.

23. The method of claim 21 further comprising one of the following:

embedding the trigger in the web page;

incorporating the trigger in the web page;

appending the trigger to the web page; and

placing the trigger in a HTTP header of the web page.

24. The method of claim 21 wherein the program is one or more of the following: a plug in and browser program.